

POST-WAR conditions of women in Europe being discussed by Mrs. Borden Harriman in a series of articles for The New York Herald Magazine centre to-day around the women of Czecho-Slovakia. The noted sociologist delves into history freely in this article and shows how through all the centuries, in spite of enormous handicaps, the women of the new republic have kept their desire for advancement. Now that full liberty is assured the sex is making great strides forward, especially in educational lines.

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ALL signs seem to justify the original belief of Americans that Czecho-Slovakia was going to be a stable country. The prosperous and happy appearance of the people in the streets of the cities is superficial evidence of this, but there are also fundamental and important facts to prove it. No single indication is more significant than that the Czechs have brought their food production to so nearly normal that most of the Government control has been removed.

On September 1 the American Relief Administration withdrew from Czecho-Slovakia, after two years of work, covering three harvests. It has been the policy of the Hoover mission to continue its work only so long as the local sources were lacking. The point has now been reached when Czecho-Slovakia can sustain its own population.

However, the effects of years of malnutrition have been so marked that it has been considered necessary for the Government, in cooperation with the Child Welfare Association, to continue the feeding in some of the public schools.

There has been a growing recognition here as elsewhere that the post-war problem in respect to children is so serious that national legislation is contemplated, making the feeding of the undernourished compulsory in the schools. In other words, the State will recognize that it is as much its duty to provide for the physical development of the child as for its mental development.

Noted Stride Already Made To Reduce Great Illiteracy

Speaking of education, a pregnant fact in regard to the future of the country is that a public school system has been established in Slovakia. There are now two thousand primary schools, eighty secondary and three or four normal. There is also one university. This is a great step forward when it is taken into consideration that the illiteracy in Slovakia, before the Czecho-Slovak Republic came into existence, was 80 per cent.

In contrast to that, Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia had only 2 per cent. It is significant though that while under Austria these provinces, besides paying taxes to Vienna, had to tax themselves in part for district public services such as schools and hospitals.

During the Hapsburg domination, and until after the revolution, girls were excluded from the study of law, technical sciences, arts and agriculture. High schools were for a long time closed to them. In spite of strong protests from women the Government established special schools of a lower degree for girls—called lyceums. In this period, Czech women, by instructing their own daughters, made it possible for them to prepare for the University.

In 1890 the Czech poetess Kraskhorska founded a society grammar school for girls, which was the first in the whole of Austria. She found a collaborator who also established a girls' grammar school in Moravia. All this, though, didn't go far in providing for millions of Czech women.

Only in 1910 were the girls allowed to form 6 per cent. of the total number of pupils (1, e. 6 to 8) in a class. Therefore, the partial opening of universities to women in 1897 had only slight significance. The revolution of 1918, however, has opened all schools to girls. But this is no new and sudden departure, for as early as 1628 John Amos Komensky (Comenius), the great teacher of nations, declared that the schools of Bohemia should be open to the young people of both sexes.

Precedent Is Ample and Old For Education of Women

Moreover, the liberties and rights with which the new Czecho-Slovak Republic invests the women are not a complete innovation and should not be unstable. It has a background in those years before the Hapsburg rule.

Bohemian Brethren, a church community, who took their origin in the fifteenth century and were famous for the purity of their life, their piety and nobleness of mind, educated their women to the same extent as the men and in the same schools.

Comenius, the last Bishop of this church and mentioned above, said:

"No reason can be given why women should be excluded from the learning of languages and other wisdom. For they are created in the image of God as men are and will also take part in the grace and kingdom to come; they are equally gifted with mind capable of grasping the wisdom and often more than we are capable of seizing the fine shaft of wit; they equally can turn their mind to great things as the administration of people, regions, estates and even whole kingdoms, and they also are able to give advice to kings and princes, to act as doctors, prophetesses and be instruments in the almighty hand of our Lord, when He wishes to give warning or inflict punishment upon priests and bishops. Why

Bird's-eye view of Prague, capital of Czecho-Slovakia. The new republic has become so prosperous that American relief work has been discontinued. The tower below is one of the ancient gates on the city bridge. This landmark has survived for centuries.



then should we not grant them more than A B C and drive them away from further learning and books?"

So wrote a Czech on the woman question 300 years ago.

But this opinion did not prevail for long. In 1920 a citizen of Prague writes:

"In 1526 the Hapsburgs were called to the throne of Bohemia and ever since aimed at the destruction of the enlightened character of Czech civilization, of Czech personality, and endeavored to break it down. They recognized only the argument of the sword and of violence, where Czechs knew science, arts and education." Books were burnt by heaps, educated men and women executed or banished, estates of Czech nobility confiscated and given to foreign hirelings, who helped to subjugate the nation that was striving for freedom and liberty. Words cannot describe how alien and adverse was the spirit which ruled over the Czechs for 300 years. And in this spirit of violence there was no place for justice to women and we saw girls not only excluded from high schools but having to fight for their right to visit craft schools and universities."

History Shows High Plane On Which Czech Women Stood

As a matter of fact, the whole course of Czech history shows the high character of the women, their fine relation to the men, and an esteem and hearty collaboration between the sexes.

In Bohemia's most glorious epoch (the fifteenth century) the Czech woman was as educated, as full of enthusiasm for the reformation of moral life and as determined even to lay down her life in defence of the truth and for freedom of thought as ever was any man. She accompanied her husband into battle with the whole family, when it became necessary to defend the country and religious freedom.

Æneas Sylvius, who became later Pope Pius II, wrote that every old woman in Tabor knew the Scriptures better than an Italian priest.

The history of the Czechs is rich in legend. There are many both mythical and historical women characters, who are examples of the fine types of the female part of the population. There were the three daughters of Keok—Libusa, princess and prophetess in one person, who is believed to have founded Prague; Lita, a priestess, and Kagi, a physician. St. Ludmila, who propagated Christianity, and the Prince's daughter Dobrawka, who married a Polish king and so brought Christianity to Poland. There were also many queens and daughters of the royal families who were great benefactresses of the people.

The story of Dagmar, Queen of the Danish King Valdemar, whose memory still lives in the songs of Danish peasants, is familiar to Americans. Then there was

Anne, the wife of King Richard of England, who was renowned for her good heart and was a mother to the English poor. By her prayers she saved the lives of Wycliffe and of the rebellious peasant leaders in their uprisings against the English aristocracy.

Proved Their Worth in War, Entering Every Industry

And so down the years, bridging the hiatus of foreign domination, the brave spirit of the Czech women was kept alive and shone, as in other countries, during the great war. In Bohemia during hostilities women proved their ability in unaccustomed trades, but especially here in the iron industry.

After the armistice, however, they were dismissed from most war industries on the demand of the men, who contended that women had not learned to be skilled operators. Where women are still employed it is only as helping hands. Moreover, certain restrictions were put on women's employment by ancient Austrian laws, some of which, in the pressure of demands for remedial legislation, still await amendment.

The Czech Republic feels that woman should be allowed the individual freedom of choosing any kind of work she likes, granted sufficient hygienic precautions, and the Czech woman delegate to the International Labor Conference in Washington in 1919 defended that position.

Women, since the coming of the republic, are admitted to labor unions. The men were unionized a long time ago, but until the revolution the unions had no liberty of action and were not respected by the employers. There are many more social and industrial reforms both in contemplation and practice.

Certainly with the interest of such a woman as Dr. Mary Masaryk, daughter of the eminent first President of Czecho-Slovakia, always alert to bettering women's conditions, there is not much danger of retrogression along that line.

Aid in Organization Given by Americans

The officials of the various American organizations which have helped to put Czecho-Slovakia on her feet cannot say enough of the enthusiasm of her people for all progressive enterprises.

Two years ago the Government requested of the Rockefeller Foundation the services of a hygienic engineer to serve as adviser in matters of public health.

The greatest problem in this line is the prevalence of tuberculosis, which, in some parts of the country is very pronounced. Under the Austrian rule no attempt whatever was made to combat it, but since the new Government took charge of the destinies of the nation it has inaugurated many preventive measures and is making



a great fight against the spread of this plague.

Normally, however, the Czechs are a hardy race, living under healthy conditions. They are devoted to outdoor sports.

Here at Prague, where the city spans the Moldava with its beautiful medieval bridges, the shallow river seems in summer, to be full of bare legged boys splashing in the water and paddling about in canoes. Football is the national sport, and all through the country on Sunday afternoons the game is in full swing, being played by girls as well as boys.

The Government has just sent twelve young doctors to America to study methods of public hygiene and sanitation. On the completion of their course twelve others will go, while those returning will put into active practice the ideas they have acquired.

Showing how deeply in earnest they are in their desire for progress, it is interesting to note, at the same time that these young doctors are abroad familiarizing themselves with modern methods, the officials under whom they must accomplish the desired results are also being put in touch with advanced ideas. A number of the highest health officials in the Government are now in America studying sanitary problems. This will make for unity of purpose in the future and prevent obstruction in high quarters.

As a corollary to the absorbing subject

Bounteous Crops Make Old Bohemia Almost Independent of Outside Aid and New Found Liberty Permits Full Education for Girls and Women Denied for Centuries Under Austrian Tyranny

of child welfare there is great interest in the establishment of a system of district nursing. The rate of infant mortality under Austria was disgracefully high. The present Government is determined to improve these conditions, and is planning a wide system for the instruction of mothers.

An American who has been in intimate touch with the progress of these reforms makes the statement that, in the light of the present programme and achievements of the authorities in these vital matters, the officials of older and less enthusiastic nations will in fifteen years time be com-

is to-day a pleasant example of comparative contentment.

The rich farm lands of Bohemia are deep in a bountiful harvest. The many little towns along the rivers and among the gently rolling hills are busy with their individual life, and the large cities, with their smoking factory chimneys, substantiate the impression of industrial enterprise.

Such a scene is due to no accident of national policy or adventitious circumstance. Although Czecho-Slovakia seems to be the one country that gained what she wanted by the Peace of Versailles, her



Mme. Masaryk, daughter of the President of Czecho-Slovakia. She has done much to aid her countrywomen.

present prosperity is due primarily to the character of her people.

Since 1526—for almost four hundred years—she had, until the revolution in 1918, been ruled by an alien dynasty. During all those centuries, from generation to generation, her hardy people waged an unceasing and bitter war for their rights as men and for their existence as a nation. Under the drastic suppression to which she was subjected her nationalism instead of being destroyed became a force that required all the strength and unscrupulousness of reactionary Austria to combat.

And when that obstacle to the liberty and progress of mankind fell with a crash in 1918, the spirit of the Czech people came, at last, into its present freedom of national expression.

It is no new thing, therefore, that animates the progress of this young republic. It is an ancient principle, for which men have lived and died through centuries of misrule, and which has at last come into its own.

This fact makes for the future stability of Czecho-Slovakia. The basis of its existence is no experiment in nationalism, but a spirit as old as the land itself. The present enthusiasm for national accomplishment is no clean sweeping of a new broom, but the sudden loosening of a long-suppressed energy.

Will Face Hard Problems And Needs Our Sympathy

But Czecho-Slovakia has begun her life as a national entity in troubled times, and her frontiers are ranged against many and shifting antagonisms. The very wealth and prosperity within her borders rouses the covetousness of the nations around her, and her course for the next few decades is by no means definitely all clear sailing.

The sympathy of America will probably be very much hers in her future endeavor. The friendship of the great Republic will be drawn to her not only because of a similarity of national ideals but because the background of her immemorial past, and the picturesqueness of the old-world life and customs of her people, constitute such a piquant setting for her present progressiveness.

Each province of the country, and each little town in some of the districts, has its own costumes for men and women, which are worn now as they were worn hundreds of years ago. No change in their quaint detail has been allowed.

The women's dress is particularly picturesque, with the bright colored skirts and caps and aprons on which is lavished all the skill in needlework of which the wearer is mistress. They are worn on Sundays and on all holidays, and with them is retained many of the old customs and ceremonies of the middle ages.

With the background of a great history, the vivid color of the survivals of a picturesque past, the sturdy accomplishments of her people and their present ideals, Czecho-Slovakia has good reason to be cheerful.



Type of Czecho-Slovak girl hitherto denied the rudiments of education, but now given ample facilities for study.

ing to Czecho-Slovakia to study her public health organization.

With all this, why should not Czecho-Slovakia be the most cheerful and prosperous element of Central Europe to-day? There are good reasons for her being so.

Alone of the Central European nations, old and new, she seems sufficiently contented with what she has acquired to be able to put her whole energy into the consolidation of her gains. All her national enthusiasm, suppressed for so many years under Hapsburg rule, is now active in laying the foundations of an enlightened and progressive State. Her hopes are well founded—she has reasons to be cheerful.

In the character of the bulk of her people, in her central position as to trade, in the actual and potential wealth of her territory she is fortunate. In a world that has more than it can well digest of dissatisfaction and covetousness Czecho-Slovakia

Animals Vain of Their Appearance

QUITE naturally it might be supposed that in the case of most creatures they would be, upon awakening in the morning, all ready for the day's fun or the day's work. Such would be an erroneous assumption. Animals, like human beings, must "dress" themselves, and although "dressing" in their case consists merely of some sort of bath and the smoothing down and arranging of their feathers or fur, a great many animals are not satisfied with themselves until they have done that. Most of them are very shy and seek the loneliest spots early in the morning; others, like the pet dog and cat, will spend hours "dressing" themselves on the hearth rug.

Birds are perhaps the neatest members of the animal world. Many species must have a bath every day. Some employ water for the purpose and some the soil; others, again, use both water and soil. The water bathers are particular as to the kind of water they use. Any one who has ever watched a pet canary will remember how it would refuse to plunge in unless the water and the bathtub were perfectly clean, and also how, when nobody appeared to be watching it, the bird would first take its bath, arrange its feathers and then eat the fresh seeds that had been

given it for breakfast. Swallows and martens do not bathe every day, because they will use only fresh rain water. Tame ducks, too, seem very fond of rain water. With the fall of a shower they ruffle up their feathers and let the rain soak in. Afterward they soak themselves down carefully, using an oil which their bodies contain, in order to get the perfectly smooth and even effect they desire. Wild ducks by the sea will fly long distances over land to obtain fresh water for their bath.

Likewise the birds that use soil for their baths are most particular about its quality. Larks and sparrows choose fine, dry, gritty dust. They splash and flutter in it as other birds do in water, and after they have finished they carefully dress their ruffled plumage with their beaks. Partridges clean themselves in loam. They scratch out the dirt and shuffle backward in it until their feathers are full of it. Then they shake themselves, and when fully dressed are as clean and fresh as any lady stepping from a white tiled bathroom. The barnyard hen bathes herself in much the same way, by wallowing and shaking herself in the dust.

Animals of the feline family spend more time than any others at their toilet. In the jungle lions and tigers use their fore feet, which they wet, for bath sponges and their tongues for combs, just as small kittens do.

Rabbits and opossums also wash their faces with their feet. Dogs, too, dislike dirt. An experienced hunter has said that whenever his dogs fail to clean themselves on bushes or grass after a day's hunt he knows that they are very tired. Dogs are especially particular in keeping their feet clean.

Horses and cows in a field may be seen taking turns in licking one another. The general belief is that the two species are great friends and that that is their way of exhibiting their love for one another. This assumption is not altogether true. They may be friends, but they are in such a case merely adding one another to dress. One may in this relation cite the case of a horse and a cow that lived in the same lot for years. The horse was a spoiled and petted creature. In some way he persuaded the cow to clean his glossy coat for him, but he was never seen to do any such favor for the cow.

The daintier animals of the forest, the giraffe, the deer, the antelope, always assist one another. Cornish, the naturalist, tells of one giraffe in a "zoo" which, when put into the institution, at once washed itself and made its coat glossy and bright everywhere except on its neck. As the weeks went by the neck became several shades darker than the body, because the creature could not reach it with its tongue.